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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 003553

SIPDIS

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TAGS: PREL IZ TU

SUBJECT: NATO IN IRAQ: PRELIMINARY TURKISH VIEWS

REF: A. USNATO 602 (NOTAL)

1B. BAGHDAD 742

Classified By: Political Military Counselor Timothy A. Betts. Reasons 1 .4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Summary: Initial Turkish reaction to a NATO role in Iraq is positive, although no decisions on the GOT's position have yet been made. An MFA official told us that he saw merit in the Alliance offering training both inside and outside Iraq. He was sympathetic to French arguments that the alliance had no authority to train civilian police but was open to the idea that this training could be somehow included. He also thought Turkey would take no position on whether it was better to have a separate statement on Iraq or to fold the subject into the communique. End Summary.

12. (C) MFA Deputy Director General for NATO Fatih Ceylan told PolMilCouns on June 23 that Ankara had yet to take a firm position on Iraqi PM Allawi's request for NATO assistance in training security forces, but he thought the idea was an attractive method of "projecting soft power." MFA took note of the difference between the PM's request for assistance "inside Iraq" and the "flexibility" contained in the NATO SYG's food for thought paper that noted the options of the Alliance training Iraqis in Iraq, in member countries or in partners territories. Ceylan thought a more flexible approach would be "in the interests of the alliance," suggesting that the alliance could even use Centers of Excellence, like the Ankara PfP Training Center.

13. (C) While military training for Iraq was a suitable activity for NATO, Ceylan said he was less sure about civilian police training. The Alliance had no program to train civilian police, although some members had gendarmeries which conceivably could be used for that role. PolMilCouns noted that as ISAF expanded in Afghanistan, police training could be inherited by the alliance, setting a precedent for police training in Iraq. Ceylan agreed.

14. (C) On how the Summit would document the issue, Ceylan said he was aware of the discussion in Brussels over whether to have a separate statement on Iraq or to fold it into the summit communique. He thought Turkey would not take a position, seeing either as equally effective.

15. (U) Baghdad minimize considered.

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